

Subject: Today's Press - November 25, 26, 27, 28 & 29, 2004

Below are highlights of today's press. Please use the papers' web sites to see the whole articles. If you want an article from the Wall Street Journal, call Susie Elwanger at (360) 236-4027. This message goes to all members of the Senior Management Team and the Program Management Team. Please distribute it more broadly in your office if you wish.

USA TODAY

November 26, 27, & 28

MEDICAL-POT FIGHT GOES TO JUSTICES (no link)

Angel Raich, a 39-year-old mother of two, smokes marijuana eight times a day in her Oakland home. She does it to relieve pain from a brain tumor and more than a dozen other maladies. She does it with her doctor's blessing and the permission of the state of California, which allows medical patients to use the otherwise illegal weed if recommended by a physician. Since 1996, California and 11 other states have passed laws that ease or eliminate sanctions for the medicinal use of pot.

November 29

No DOH-related news.

WALL STREET JOURNAL

November 29

No DOH related news.

SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

November 25

NEED A DIETING PARTNER? FAT FIDO WILL DO JUST FINE

Couples who exercise together, experts have always said, are more likely to stick to a fitness plan than those who go it alone. But a new study, offering a twist on the old-fashioned buddy system, has found that people looking for a sidekick need look no further than their pets.

GROUP FAULTS REPORTING OF PESTICIDE STUDY

An environmental group has taken issue with the way the state Agriculture Department released results of a pesticide study earlier this week, saying the agency misled the public into believing that no pesticides were found in two watersheds.

November 26

[THE VOLCANO IS FAST GROWING ITS NEW TOP](#)

While on most late fall days the clouds obscure new growth, the meters on the mountain don't lie: Mount St. Helens continues to build a new mountaintop at a rapid rate.

[LOW-INCOME ELDERLY LOSE MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM](#)

At least 600 elderly patients with Alzheimer's disease and depression will lose services from Spokane County's mental health system.

November 27

[ACT NOW TO DEAL WITH OVERDUE FLU PANDEMIC, HEALTH OFFICIAL URGES](#)

After almost a year of trying to bring Asia's bird flu under control, World Health Organization experts are now warning the disease is the most likely candidate to cause the world's next pandemic, with the possibility of as many as 7 million deaths.

['TACOMA AROMA' STRIKES AGAIN](#)

Mixing with the odors that often waft across the Tideflats in this city's industrial area is a staggering new stench - described by one local businessman as "dead-body strong." Tyler Anderson, who sells boats on a small lot here, was driven this week to search nearby weeds and a saltwater inlet for the source of the stink.

[TOWN SPLIT OVER VALUE OF EPA'S CLEANUP](#)

The Environmental Protection Agency left town last week after finishing a \$2.7 million Superfund cleanup project, leaving residents with new lawns and mixed feelings.

[TRIBE PLANS SEVERE HEALTH-CENTER CUTS](#)

Puyallup Indian health officials are planning severe cuts to services and staff to counter decreasing federal funding and rising patient levels.

November 29

[ARSENIC, LEAD TAINT SOILS AT MANY 'CHILD-USE AREAS'](#)

Margaret Schumacher feels sick when she thinks about the children at her in-home day care center digging and playing in arsenic-tainted soil.

[ARSENIC'S IMPACT SEEN OVER LONG TERM](#)

There is no conclusive evidence that children were harmed by the arsenic and other contaminants spread by the old Asarco smelter near Tacoma, experts say.

[FIRST, SAY YOU'RE SORRY](#) (opinion)

For too long, practicing medicine in the United States has often meant never having -- or daring -- to say you're sorry. Fear of liability often trumped the human urge to express regret.

[BREAST-IMAGING 'COIL' TO BE UNVEILED](#)

They are hoping the blue-gray ergonomic examination table will improve comfort for women undergoing breast cancer screenings, give doctors greater access for tissue samples and, in the end, detect problems sooner rather than later.

[SEATTLE TIMES](#)

November 25

[BUGS, WEEDS JOIN IN TERROR FIGHT](#) (no link)

Don't squash that bug! Beetles, bees and worms may be the government's next line of defense in the war on terror. Backed by the Pentagon, scientists are recruiting insects, shellfish, bacteria and even weeds to act as "bio-sentinels," which give early warning of biological and chemical attacks, detect explosives or monitor the spread of contamination.

FLORIDA OKS 3-STRIKES MEDICAL MALPRACTICE LAW

Florida voters this month approved a three-strikes law unlike any other state's – a measure aimed not at killers and thieves but at doctors who foul up.

BRITISH GOVERNMENT FIGHTS BATTLE OF THE BULGE

Prime Minister Tony Blair's government has taken a hard look at England and delivered its assessment: It's an island of too many inhabitants who are fat, clumsy, promiscuous, drug-abusing, chain-smoking, pub-crawling drunks who are sleeping, binge drinking and puffing their way to sterility, liver disease and lung cancer.

HOSPITAL DETAILS WHAT WENT WRONG

A Seattle hospital's recent decision to switch antiseptics from a brown solution to a colorless liquid appears to have played a key role in the death of an Everett woman.

MARIJUANA TREATMENT REJECTED FOR ANXIETY

Despite what it called "moving and extraordinarily brave" testimony from patients, the state's medical commission has declined to allow doctors to authorize medical marijuana for depression and severe anxiety.

November 26

SCHOOLS' BAN ON JUNK FOOD TAKE BITE OUT OF BUDGETS

School districts are ending the sale of candy and pop, but the new policies eat into student activities subsidized by snack profits.

ABSTINENCE FOCUS PUSHED

President Bush's re-election ensures that more federal money will flow to abstinence education that precludes discussion of birth control, even as the administration awaits evidence that the approach persuades teens to refrain from sex.

B.C. DEATHS BLAMED ON RARE FUNGUS

Four people, dozens of dogs and cats, 11 porpoises and a horse have died from a rare tropical fungus since it was detected on Vancouver Island in 1999, a study has concluded.

WILL WASHINGTONIANS CARRY THE HEALTH-CARE BANNER?

Californians came oh-so-close to planting the flag of mandated health coverage on the U.S. mainland. Proposition 72 went down by a hair, despite a \$9 million campaign to sink it. California's model was Hawaii, which requires employers to insure workers who put in at least 20 hours a week.

November 27

AMID DRUG SCARES, CONGRESS PONDERES NEW FDA REFORMS

Questions of conflict have arisen for an agency that approves drugs and then must look for problems with them. Also of concern: ads for such drugs before their safety is established.

[FLU-VACCINE SHORTAGE LEAVES SENIORS AT RISK](#)

As medical experts brace for a flu season with the nation's worst vaccine shortage, the irony of the much-coveted flu shot is that it is least effective in those who need it most.

[FISH-MEAL STENCH PROMPTS COMPLAINTS \(no link\)](#)

Neighbors of a Tacoma Tideflats business are gagging at a rotten-fish odor, prompting health and clean-air agencies to take action.

[INDIAN HEALTH STAFF, SERVICES FACE CUTS \(no link\)](#)

Puyallup Indian health officials are planning cuts to services and staff levels to counter decreasing federal funding and rising patient levels.

November 28

[BEEN IN FOR A TUNE-UP LATELY?](#)

When was the last time you went to your doctor without a specific symptom or health problem on your mind?

November 29

[MEDICAL MARIJUANA CASE CRUCIAL](#)

Local sheriff's deputies and federal Drug Enforcement Administration agents disagreed when they converged on Diane Monson's house in Oroville, Calif., two years ago.

[THE NEWS TRIBUNE \(TACOMA\)](#)

November 25

[HOSPITAL ADMITS FATAL MISTAKE THAT POISONED PATIENT](#)

A woman who underwent surgery for a brain aneurysm was mistakenly injected with a highly toxic antiseptic solution and died, hospital officials have admitted. Hospital officials have apologized, issued a detailed staff memorandum detailing what happened, retrained staff and changed procedures in an effort to prevent similar mistakes.

November 26

[TRIBAL HEALTH IN FINANCIAL CRISIS](#)

For several weeks, rumors have been raging at the Puyallup Tribal Health Authority regarding steps directors might take to resolve a growing financial crisis at the tribal health center. The Puyallup Tribal Health Authority includes the Takopid Health Center, the Puyallup Tribal Treatment Center and the Kwawatchee Counseling Center. According to 2002 figures, the most recent available, the tribal health clinic had 11,564 active patients, up from 8,813 in 1996. Of that total number of patients, 1,675 were members of the Puyallup Tribe and 4,451 were members of other tribes.

November 27

[U.S. FLU SHOT DEMAND DROPS AT B.C. CLINICS](#)

After weeks of immunizing border-hopping Americans, Canadian clinics still have a large supply of vaccine for Puget Sound-area residents who can get to it. But an hours-long trip might not be necessary much longer. The Food and Drug Administration has inspected flu vaccine plants in Quebec and Europe to see if they meet American standards. The agency's decision, expected next week, could clear the importation of additional doses.

[N.Y. CREATES SITE ON OBESITY, INSURANCE](#)

The state of New York is responding to complaints from citizens about the complexity of health insurance coverage for obesity treatment by releasing an online consumer guide. "Focus On: Overcoming Obesity" will be available online (<http://www.oag.state.ny.us>) through the state Attorney General's Office starting Sunday. The site was created in response to complaints and concerns from consumers to the office.

November 28

No DOH-related news.

November 29

[LARGEST QUAKE IN WEEKS HITS MT. ST. HELENS](#)

A 3.1-magnitude earthquake shook the crater at Mount St. Helens on Saturday, the strongest quake at the volcano since mid-October. U.S. Geological Survey scientists said they did not believe a major eruption was imminent - just a continuation of the minor ash and steam eruptions that have been occurring since the mountain reawakened this fall.

[SPOKESMAN REVIEW](#)

November 25

[COALITION SAYS STATE DISTORTING FINDINGS](#)

An environmental group has taken issue with the way the state Department of Agriculture released results of a pesticide study earlier this week, saying the agency misled the public into believing no pesticides were found in two watersheds. On Monday, the state Department of Agriculture reported results from the first year of a three-year study to monitor pesticide concentrations in salmon-bearing streams. No pesticide residues were detected in about 96 percent of water samples from two Washington state watersheds, the agency reported.

[NEW SEPTIC SYSTEM RULES WILL BE TOPIC OF WORKSHOP MONDAY](#)

The public is invited to a workshop Monday about proposed new rules for onsite septic systems. The Washington State Department of Health said it's writing the rule revisions to incorporate the latest information on protecting the public from sewage health problems. Monday's discussion topics include requirements for new septic systems and changes to inspection requirements for existing systems, among other issues.

November 26, 27, 28 & 29

No DOH related news.

[OLYMPIAN](#)

November 25

[POLLUTANT INCREASES IN BREAST MILK, FOOD \(no link\)](#)

Northwest Environmental Watch tested the breast milk of 40 women from Oregon, Washington, Montana and British Columbia and found the PBDEs in every woman tested. A series of studies last year showed U.S. women have the world's highest levels of the bromine-based fire retardants, nearing levels that have been shown to damage learning, memory and behavior in lab mice.

[OUR VIEWS: WATER PROJECTS MERIT SUPPORT FROM PUBLIC \(no link\)](#)

Two recent but unrelated decisions demonstrate how governing officials are attempting to protect precious water resources in this state. At the state level,

Gov. Gary Locke has encouraged the Department of Ecology to set minimum stream flows as a means of improving environmental conditions for threatened fish populations.

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP FINDS FAULT WITH REPORTING OF PESTICIDE STUDY
(no link)

An environmental group has taken issue with the way the state Department of Agriculture releases results of a pesticide study earlier this week, saying the agency misled the public into believing no pesticides were found in two watersheds.

WOMAN DIES; SEATTLE HOSPITAL 'CAN'T APOLOGIZE ENOUGH' FOR ERROR (no link)

A woman who underwent surgery for a brain aneurysm was mistakenly injected with a highly toxic antiseptic solution and dies, hospital officials have admitted. Mary McClinton, 69, of Everett had the operation Nov. 4 at Virginia Mason Medical Center and died Tuesday after amputation and other extreme attempts to keep her alive, hospital quality chief Dr. Robert Caplan said.

November 26 & 27

No DOH-related news.

November 28

HEALTH OFFICIALS LOOK FOR BETTER SCIENCE BEHIND VACCINE-MAKING (no link)

For five decades, billions of arms have been injected with flu shots containing clear liquid drawn from 11-day-old fertilized chicken eggs. Companies inject the eggs with flu strains. The eggs become tiny incubators, brewing viruses that are then killed and bottled in vials. The nation's entire flu vaccine supply is produced that way, including the 48 million shots that Chiron Corp. can't sell this season because of manufacturing problems in England.

November 29

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS BOLSTER FIGHT AGAINST UNDERAGE TOBACCO USE

Sometimes, the best way to get kids' attention is to gross them out. For example, most elementary and middle school students who have participated in Teens Against Tobacco Use probably will remember the program's hands-on activities such as the "body picture," in which kids are encouraged to draw pictures of the various health risks of tobacco use, such as lung cancer, yellow fingertips and a hairy tongue. The one-hour American Lung Association program, which sends high school students into elementary and middle school classes to talk frankly about the health risks of tobacco use, has been offered in South Sound schools for several years.

YAKIMA-HERALD REPUBLIC

November 25, 26, 27 & 29

No DOH related news.

November 28

TRIBE'S HEALTH GETS BOOST FROM GRANT

Yakama tribal members suffering from diabetes will soon get a push into healthier living thanks to a more than \$2 million federal grant. The Yakama Indian Nation is one of 30 tribes recently awarded competitive grants sought by 125 applicants. The tribe will receive \$404,000 annually for five years from Indian

Health Services, a federal health program for American Indians and Alaska natives

TRI-CITY HERALD

November 25, 26, 27 & 29
No DOH related news.

November 28

IMPATIENCE AT LA CLINICA IS AN ENCOURAGING SIGN

Critics' impatience with the La Clinica board of directors is, at the least, an expression of hope. That patients and other La Clinica supporters are anxious for the board to patch things up at the community health clinic means not only that they understand how vital the clinic is, but also that they have faith in the board to attempt the task. Board members will need that community goodwill for the hard decisions necessary to strike a balance between improving the clinic's bottom line and ensuring it can continue to care for its 30,000 medically needy patients. Chances are, not everyone will get what they want in that bargain.

LARGEST QUAKE IN WEEKS HITS MT. ST. HELENS

A 3.1-magnitude earthquake shook the crater at Mount St. Helens on Saturday, the strongest quake at the volcano since mid-October. U.S. Geological Survey scientists said they did not believe a major eruption was imminent - just a continuation of the minor ash and steam eruptions that have been occurring since the mountain reawakened this fall. Saturday's earthquake appeared to be a larger version of the small earthquakes scientists have registered about once a minute for the past several weeks, the USGS said in a news release. Scientists hoped good weather Sunday and Monday would allow them to get a better look at the volcano.

WASHINGTON POST

November 25, 26, 28 & 29
No DOH related news.

November 27

FLU CRISIS SPARKS FRESH LOOK AT VACCINE PRODUCTION

For five decades, billions of arms have been injected with flu shots containing clear liquid drawn from 11-day-old fertilized chicken eggs. Companies inject the eggs with flu strains. The eggs become tiny incubators, brewing viruses that are then killed and bottled in vials. The nation's entire flu vaccine supply is produced that way, including the 48 million shots that Chiron Corp. can't sell this season because of manufacturing problems in England. With a crisis sparked by the flu-shot shortage, federal health officials are eager for new, more flexible technologies that could produce a vaccine faster and more cheaply, enticing companies to enter a market that others have largely abandoned because of poor profits.

NEW YORK TIMES

November 25, 26, 27, 28 & 29
No DOH related news.

EVERETT HERALD

November 29

LYNNWOOD MOTHER EXPLAINS SURVIVING DAILY LIFE WITH HIV

Days go by without much drama for Mary Ruth, 45, who lives with her family just north of the city limits of Lynnwood. On a typical day, Mary Ruth, a wife and mother, gets up about 5 a.m., gets ready to leave, then drives to a gym in Edmonds for a half-hour workout. She comes home to fix breakfast and get her 12-year-old daughter ready for school. (Snohomish Health District is mentioned in the article.)